

Oifig an Leas-Cheann Foirne (Tacaíocht)
Office of The Deputy Chief of Staff (Support)

05 May 2010

Dear Mr Walker,

I wish to refer to the considerable extent of correspondence initiated by you and addressed to a number of office holders within Defence Forces Headquarters in the recent past.

The death of any member of the Defence Forces is a tragic and regrettable loss and the Defence Forces extends their deepest sympathy to the families and friends of Cpl Heneghan, Pte Walsh and Pte Armstrong.

The circumstances surrounding the death of these three soldiers in 1989 was the subject of an extensive inquiry in the immediate period following the fatalities. This inquiry concluded that no UNIFIL personnel could be held responsible for the incident.

The matter was subsequently reinvestigated in 2003 following an RTE documentary. During the course of this subsequent investigation the families of the deceased soldiers met with the Minister for Defence and a review of all the evidence available was conducted. This investigation concluded that given the passage of time, the lack of contemporaneous accounts at the time and the subjective nature regarding the question of whether the military commanders should or should not have foreseen a situation such as the one which resulted in the death of these three soldiers, that it was difficult to see how any further inquiry could come to an alternative view to that on the initial inquiry.

This was the view arrived at in 2003, some fourteen years after the incident. Save for new evidence being uncovered, it is difficult to see how this position would have changed in the intervening years. As no additional evidence has been brought to light there is no basis for reopening an inquiry which concluded with its findings over two decades ago.

You are requested to cease your correspondence with Defence Forces Headquarters.

D. Ashe Maj Gen
DAVE ASHE
Major General
Deputy Chief of Staff (Support)